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Prime Minister of Kurdistan Region of Iraq Concludes Visit to UAE
Officials Discussed Future Trade Conference and Establishing a UAE Consulate in Erbil

DUBAI, UAE, 16 February 2010 -- Prime Minister Dr. Barham Salih has completed a four-day visit to the United Arab Emirates, where he met Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates. He also met several ministers and senior officials to discuss trade and political relations.

Dr Salih's visit builds on the KRG's exchanges and visits over the past few years, including meetings with the leaders of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. Dr. Salih and Sheikh Maktoum discussed ways to promote bilateral ties between the Kurdistan Region and the UAE. Sheikh Maktoum commended the Kurdistan Region for its role in helping to improve relations between the UAE and Iraq. Mr. Abdul Aziz Al-Ghurair, Speaker of the UAE's Federal National Council, was also at the meeting.

Dr. Salih asked the UAE's leadership to strengthen economic cooperation with the Kurdistan Region, and support efforts by Kurdistan companies to stimulate trade. He added that the UAE's experience in management and career development could be of particular value to the KRG and expressed his wish for UAE assistance in development and administrative reform.

Prime Minister Salih, accompanied by a KRG delegation, also met the UAE's Finance Minister, Foreign Minister, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Commander of the armed forces, the Ruler of Sharjah, and other senior UAE officials. Dr. Salih was accompanied by KRG Interior Minister Karim Sinjari, Chairman of the Investment Board Herish Muharram, and several businessmen from the Kurdistan Region.

The delegation visited the headquarters of the Emirates National Oil Company (ENOC), where Chief Executive Mr. Saeed Abdullah Khoury briefed Dr. Salih and the delegation about ENOC's structure and services.

The KRG Prime Minister was also received by Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Minister of Finance, to discuss trade promotion and economic cooperation. The KRG already has good trade ties with the UAE, which it hopes to strengthen further with this visit. In 2007, several KRG ministers participated in the Kurdistan of Iraq -- UAE Business Exchange Conference in Dubai, which attracted delegates from over 600 companies.

Prime Minister Salih and Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the UAE's Foreign Minister, discussed mechanisms for creating a suitable environment for investment and capital flows. Sheikh Al Nahyan informed Dr. Salih of the UAE's plan to send a delegation of high-ranking officials and businessmen to the Kurdistan Region, building on the strong relationship that has already developed between the Region and the UAE.

The delegation met General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu

Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE armed forces. The two sides discussed how to strengthen relations between the UAE and Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region, in the fields of politics, economics, and education - particularly in relation to university and graduate studies. They discussed the possibility of convening another conference on trade and investment.

The KRG delegation met Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed Bin Sultan al Qasimi, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Sharjah, and Mr. Abdullah Ibrahim Al Shehhi Azwai, Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq. Mr. Hussein Sadeq, Iraq's Consul General in Dubai, accompanied the delegation.

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